

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 11152 221426Z

41

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DRC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

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ORM-03 AID-20 FDRE-00 HEW-08 SCA-01 SCS-03 /178 W

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R 221240Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3409

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY OUVAMABAD

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, BG

SUBJECT: INDIAN VIEW OF FLOOD SITUATION IN BANGLADESH

SUMMARY: INDIA HAS GIVEN BANGLADESH SOME RELIEF AND PLANS MORE, BUT IT HAS MADE CLEAR TO BANGLADESH THAT THERE WON'T MUCH, AND NO FOOD AT ALL. THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN BANGLADESH, AND PARTICULARLY THE FOOD PROBLEM, GREATLY WORRIES INDIA. IT IS NOT SO CONCERNED ABOUT THE OUTLOOK FOR SHORT-TERM POLITICAL STABILITY IN BANGLADESH, HOWEVER, NOR HAS INDIA OBSERVED MUCH IMPACT ON NEIGHBORING INDIAN STATES OF THE FLOODS IN BANGLADESH. END SUMMARY

1. INDIAN ASSISTANCE TO BANGLADESH: THE INDIAN RED CROSS HAS GIVEN RS. 500,000 (\$65,000) WORTH OF RELIEF SUPPLIES AND THE GOI IS PROVIDING RS. 5.5 MILLION (\$700,000) WORTH OF POL, LARGELY LUBRICANTS, TO NORTHERN BANGLADESH. (INDIA DELIVERED SOME OF IT TO THE BORDER BUT FOUND THAT THE BDG COULD NOT HANDLE IT, SO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 11152 221426Z

IT HAS BEGUN MOVING THE POL INTO BANGLADESH.) INDIA PLANS ANOTHER

RS. 100 MILLION (\$13 MILLION) OF COMMODITY ASSISTANCE (TEXTILES, LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS, ETC.) ON A CONCESSIONAL AND AN ESSENTIALLY LONG-TERM BASIS.

2. BANGLADESH REQUESTS: THE HEAD OF THE BANGLADESH DIVISION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR AUGUST 22 THAT THE BDG ASKS INDIA FOR SOMETHING ALMOST EVERY DAY. MOST RECENTLY BANGLADESH REPORTED THAT IT HAD ONLY ONE HELICOPTER OPERATING AND REQUESTED INDIAN HELP. INDIA HAS TOLD THE BDG THAT THERE IS REALLY VERY LITTLE IT CAN DO BECAUSE OF ITS OWN SITUATION. OF COURSE INDIA DOESN'T HAVE THE ONE ITEM BANGLADESH NEEDS MOST--FOOD.

3. ECONOMIC SITUATION IN BANGLADESH: INDIAN OFFICIALS DON'T SEE THE FLOODS THEMSELVES AS MUCH OF A PROBLEM AS THE TOTAL ECONOMIC SITUATION IN BANGLADESH, WHICH THEY TERM "DISASTROUS." THESE OFFICIALS SEE BANGLADESH AS NEEDING 3 TO 4 MILLION TONS OF FOOD ALONE, BUT THEY DON'T SEEM TO HAVE STUDIED THE PROBLEM OF DISTRIBUTING THE FOOD ONCE IT REACHES BANGLADESH.

4. POLITICAL SITUATION: INDIAN OFFICIALS ARE MORE SANGUINE ABOUT THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BANGLADESH, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT TERM. THEY SEE NO STRONG, UNIFIED OPPOSITION TO SHEIKH MUJIB. WHILE ADMITTING THERE ARE DISCIPLINE AND MORALE PROBLEMS IN THE BANGLADESH ARMED FORCES, THEY OBSERVE THAT EVEN THERE FACTIONS EXIST AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY THERE ARE FEW PROSPECTS FOR UNITED ACTION BY THE MILITARY.

5. IMPACT IN INDIA OF THE BANGLADESH FLOODS: RELATIVELY FEW REFUGEES HAVE CROSSED FROM BANGLADESH TO INDIA - PERHAPS 2000 TO THE INDIAN STATE OF TRIPURA AS OF LAST WEEK, BUT MORE APPEAR TO BE ARRIVING NOW. NO INDIAN OFFICIAL HAS MENTIONED ANY CONCERN ABOUT INCREASED HARDSHIP FOR HINDUS IN BANGLADESH AS A RESULT OF THE FLOODS. NOR DO THEY SEE ANY CHANGE IN THE PATTERN OF TRADE AND SMUGGLING.

6. MRS. GANDHI'S VISIT TO BANGLADESH: ONE OFFICIAL TOLD US MRS. GANDHI'S VISIT TO BANGLADESH, TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR LATE THIS YEAR, MIGHT BE POSTPONED BECAUSE OF THE FLOODS.

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 11152 221426Z

7. INDIAN REACTION TO PAKISTANI FOOD OFFER: THE HEAD OF THE BANGLADESH DIVISION WAS NOT AWARE OF THE PAKISTANI OFFER OF ALMOST 5,000 TONS OF RICE FOR BANGLADESH, BUT HE THOUGHT THIS WAS "VERY GOOD" AND "WELCOME."
MOYNIHAN

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Message Attributes

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MORE
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